DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 368 982 CE 066 412

AUTHOR Burt, Lorna; Lewandowski, Carol
TITLE Documentation.
INSTITUTION Mercer County Community Coll., Trenton, N.J.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, DC. National Workplace Literacy Program.
PUB DATE 94
CONTRACT VA198A2090
NOTE 55p.; For related documents, see ED 351 578-599 and CE 066 398-418.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; Adult Literacy; Basic Skills; Business Correspondence; Business English; *Documentation; *Job Skills; Learning Activities; *Literacy Education; Skill Development; Visual Aids; *Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS Workplace LIteracy

ABSTRACT

This workbook, designed for workplace literacy courses, contains materials for a course on documentation. The six sessions of the course cover the following topics: (1) general principles of procedure writing; (2) principles of clear communication (clarity, audience, visuals) and identification of systems types, accounts, and customer requests; (3) working with examples and fixing bad documentation; (4) good and bad documentation; (5) students writing their own documentation; and (6) students critiquing others' documentation work. The lessons include information sheets and exercises, such as sentence completion, fill-in-the-blanks, and simulations. (KC)

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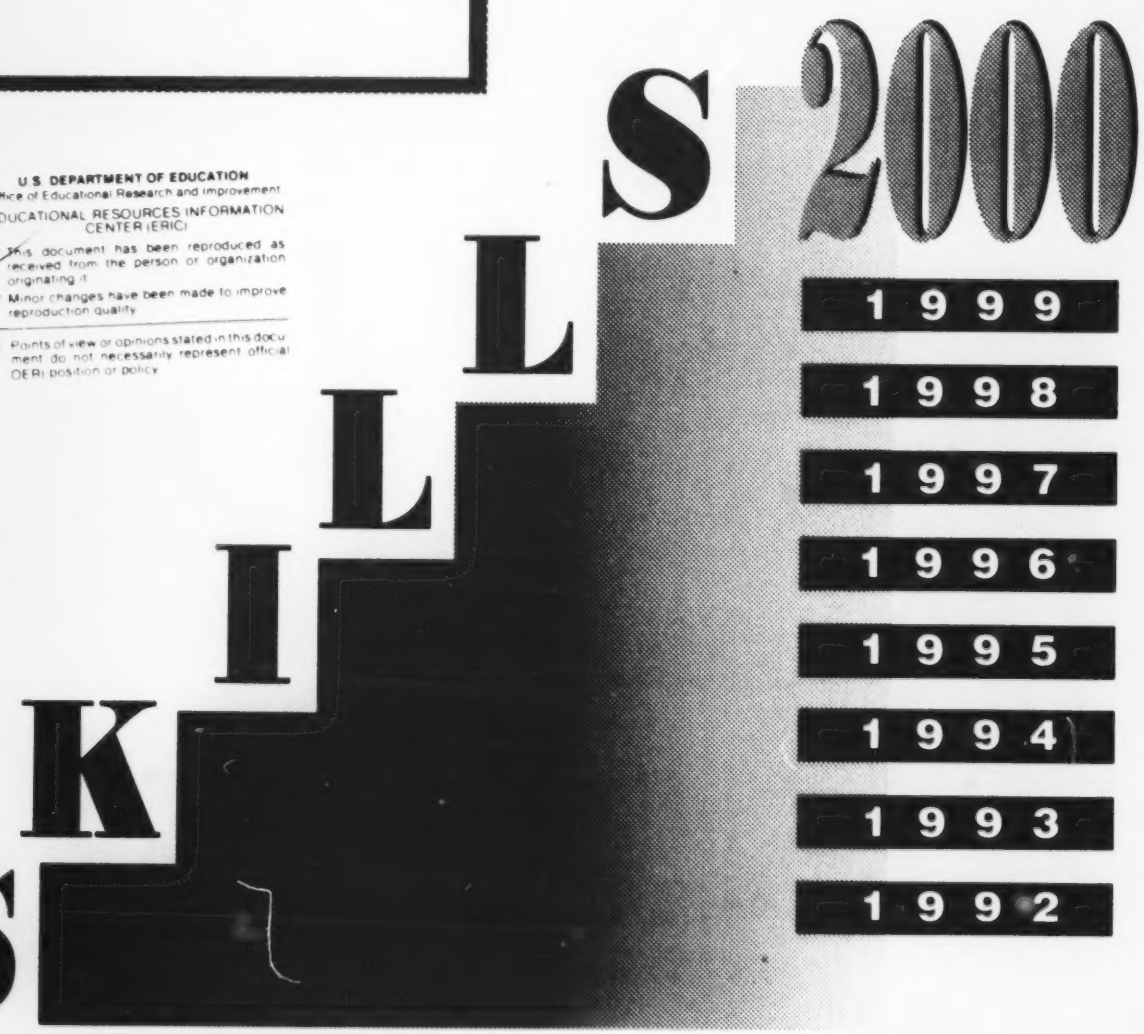

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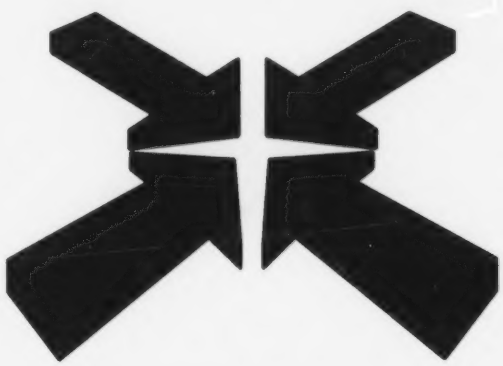

Mercer County Community College
Division of Corporate and Community Programs
1200 Old Trenton Road
Trenton, NJ 08690

Elaine S. Weinberg
Director, Workplace Skills

Prepared under a United States Department of Education
National Workplace Literacy Grant

1994

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Mercer County Community College thanks Lorna Burt and Carol Lewandowski, Senior Education Specialists/Curriculum Developers for creating this manual. Through their valuable contributions employees in manufacturing and service industries learned concepts relevant to their existing jobs and strategies for learning other tasks if that opportunity should arise.

DOCUMENTATION

COURSE OUTLINE:

Session 1

- General principles of procedure writing
  - what is goal? purpose?
  - what is the best method for getting instructions across?
    standardized style: active voice, strong verbs, subject/verb agreement, tense consistency, clear pronouns, clear time words
  - sequence/complete instructions – keep sequence consistent

  Students will write their own instructions for something they do at work.
  e.g. getting into Word for Windows

Session 2

- principles of clear communication: clarity/audience/visuals
  assume audience is a raving bunch of neophytes –
  - particular attention on what questions the audience would need to have answered
  - generate student list of *questions* and concerns
  - visuals: screen samples, diagrams

- identification of system types/accounts/customer requests
  - generalizations?
  - standardized approaches?
  - client profiles – questions generated to standardize approach (what questions would you ask if you were asking about a new client or new system)

DOCUMENTATION

Session 3

- working with examples/fixing bad documentation
  - lack of clarity – ambiguous phrases, misplaced modifiers, unclear pronouns
  - incomplete steps – steps missing, steps not clear, sequence not given
  - poor profiles – fragments missing

  Students will work in pairs on worksheets and on a sample of bad documentation (short) written by us – then they will critique each other's work

Session 4

- good/bad documentation
  - generate list of comparison/contrast from students: what makes good/bad documentation? (clarity, user friendliness, consistent style, good and clear sequence, visuals)

  Students will work in pairs on exercises that apply these concepts – bad documentation sample from Michelle

Session 5

- students write their own documentation

Session 6

- Students critique each other's work and give feedback

DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 1

OBJECTIVES:

In order to write clear documentation, at the end of this session students will be able to do the following:

- identify goal and purpose
- identify the best method for getting instructions across
- use clear consistent sequence
- use concise language

TOPICS:

- goal and purpose
- clear sequence
- active vs. passive voice
- verb use
- modifiers
- pronouns
- clear instructions
- documentation pitfalls

METHOD:

- class discussion
- individual work on worksheets
- pair work

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DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 1

EVALUATION:

At the end of this session, students will be competent in these areas:

- determining the purpose and goal of documentation
- writing in clear sequence
- using concise language
- generating simple instructions for a work task

Coursework will be evaluated by students in both classes. Students' names will not appear on coursework.

MATERIALS:

- worksheets
- student generated instructions

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GOALS OF DOCUMENTATION

- to write effective documentation so that the user does not make mistakes
- to write in the most efficient sequence
- to write so that the document be read from the first word to the last. The user must follow each step in order to complete the procedure.
- to write in a clear, concise manner: using readily understood vocabulary and short sentences, taking into account the reading levels and experience of the users
- to allow the product or system to shape the documentation
- to have a flexible system that can easily be updated or adapted

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING INSTRUCTIONS

When we write instructions, we must remember that our primary goal is *to instruct!* To do that, we must use the following:

- active voice
- clear sequence
- strong and clear verbs
- consistent verb tenses
- correctly placed modifiers
- clear pronouns
- clear time words or other directives
- specific number amounts

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CLEAR SEQUENCE

Nothing is more frustrating than trying to read steps that are out of order. We have to use **chronological** order and be consistent in our sequence if we expect our audience to succeed.

Look at these steps. What are they instructions for? What would the title be? Put the steps into the correct order.

HOW TO _____

_____ insert paper into copier tray

_____ remove protective wrap from paper ream

_____ take paper tray out of copier

_____ press tray release button

_____ put paper tray back into position in copier

_____ hit the reset button

_____ make sure paper is placed correctly in tray (portrait, not landscape)

_____ press copy button to resume copying

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ACTIVE VOICE VS. PASSIVE VOICE

The Passive Voice is a structure that includes a form of the verb TO BE, and a past participle. The Active Voice is just what it says – more active, for it has a clear subject and a regular verb form.

- **Passive**: The computer *is turned on* by the coordinator.
- **Active:** The coordinator *turns on* the computer.

The Passive voice is messy, wordy, and difficult to read through if you are looking for steps and directives. Look at this sentence and consider its problems:

PASSIVE:

The computer must be turned on, after it has been plugged in, and then the screen can be reached by pressing the F3 key, but not before the user number has been entered into the system by the user.

The **ACTIVE** form is much shorter, easier to read and much easier to understand:

After you plug in the computer and turn it on, enter your user number and press F3.

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ACTIVE VOICE VS. PASSIVE VOICE

Determine if these sentences are active or passive. If they are passive, make them active.

1. The manager opened the file drawer and took out the supplies.

2. The system was designed by a Mobile executive, but it was redesigned by our company for its own use.

3. After the enter button is pushed, the HELP screen should be seen by the user.

4. The zip assignments are created for every new system and the addresses are contained in these files.

5. We use the hard drive to store our shared files, but we use disks to store our personal accounts.

6. The files on the hard drive are never duplicated, but they are often transferred between users.

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STRONG AND CLEAR VERBS

When we tell someone to do something, we want to make sure that the thing we want to tell them to do is clear and unambiguous. Got that?

In other words, don't use verbs that are unclear or unprecise.

Example 1: **Shut down** the computer when you are not using it.

What does **shut down** mean? Does it mean turn the system off? Or just turn that particular program off? Or does it mean return to a blank screen?

To avoid such confusion, think of the specific action that you want the person to do, and tell him/her to do just that.

Revision: **Turn** the computer **off** when you are not using it.

Example 2: **Exit** this screen.

What does **exit** mean? Move on to the next screen? Or move back to the previous one? And how do I exit anyway? Don't assume that your reader will know exactly what you mean or how to do it!

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CONSISTENT VERB TENSES

When you give directions, use **commands** when appropriate – that means you don't need to have a subject, just a verb. Commands are clear, concise, and easy to interpret.

Example:

> ***Sentence:*** You have to put the disk into the A-drive.
> ***Command:*** Put the disk into the A-drive.

In general, avoid using the unnecessary third person -- that is, don't talk about what "the user" must do when in fact your audience is made up of users. Just use simple commands.

If you do use subjects, make sure that your verb tenses are consistent -- that means all the same, or in similar time frames.

Example:

> The computer has two drives: the C-drive and the A-drive. The A-drive will have a disk portal, but the C-drive won't have a portal.
>
> **Note:** "has" is the present tense, but "will have" is the future. There is no good reason to jump tenses, so stay in the present tense.

Revision:

> The computer has two drives: the C-drive and the A-drive. The A-drive has a disk portal, but the C-drive does not have a portal.

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CORRECTLY PLACED MODIFIERS

Modifiers are words or phrases that give more information about the subject, verb, or object in a clause. A modifier **dangles** when the word it modifies is not actually in the sentence, or is **misplaced** when it seems to modify another part of the sentence than the writer intended. The result leads to confusion.

Discuss the following sentences. How can you rewrite them to make them clearer?

1. Unless completely rewired, nobody should handle the faulty equipment.

2. The report should be filed by the user in the folder.

3. Upon entering the information into the system, the disk should be updated.

4. We need to have a meeting to discuss the new system that will be put into effect by January 10th.

5. Cracked and falling apart, Steve put the broken printer cover into a box.

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CLEAR PRONOUNS

- A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun. If you have more than one noun followed by a single pronoun, the reference can be unclear or confusing.

  Example:

  Keep the Quick Reference Card with the manual for easy reference and make sure it is updated regularly.

  Note: what does the "it" refer to? How can you rewrite this sentence to make your idea clear?

- Pronouns must agree in number with the noun they refer to. Be especially careful if there are modifying phrases.

  Example:

  The bottle of aspirins is in the cabinet where *they* belong.

  Note: *the bottle* is singular, but *they* is plural. Why did this mistake occur? How can you fix it?

- Pronouns that replace people must be correct in gender. Although "he" is stylistically correct, consider your audience and be gender sensitive.

  Example:

  After the coordinator writes down the information, *he/she* must enter it into the system.

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CLEAR PRONOUNS

- Indefinite pronouns are always singular, so be careful of possessives that refer to them. Indefinite pronouns are these: everyone, someone, no one, everybody, somebody, nobody, anyone, anybody

  ***Example*:**

  Everyone has the opportunity to correct their mistakes.

  Note: *Everyone* is singular, but *their* is plural. How would you correct this error?

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CLEAR PRONOUNS

Rewrite these sentences and correct the pronoun errors.

1. The grower must obtain the correct form and receipt and put it in an envelope with the other documents.

2. Everyone who does documentation must be sure to enter their names into the system.

3. The coordinators will generate reports, statements, and system scripts; the temporary data personnel will take them and use them to update the files.

4. After reading the notebook of reports, the manager gave them to his assistant.

5. The account coordinator takes time to check his accounts, record the information and enter them into the system.

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CLEAR TIME WORDS AND SPECIFIC AMOUNTS

- When you tell someone where to put something, how much to do something, how long to do something, or at what time to do something, you must give **exact** information.

  What's wrong with these sentences?

  Example 1:

  Let the computer run **for a little bit** before you turn on the screen, and then hit the **other button.**

  How long is "a little bit" and *which* button am I to hit?
  These words are unclear. How could you be more precise?

  Example 2:

  Turn the nut **a few times** and let the glue dry **for a while**.

  How many times is *a few times*? 3 or 6 times? How long should the glue take to dry? 10 seconds or 10 minutes? Be precise!

- When you give directions, make sure you specify exactly *where* and give *reference* points.

  Example 1:

  The title field appears **near** the address field.

  What does *near* mean? Next to? To the left of? To the right of? Below? How can you make this directive more clear?

  Example 2:

  The account number appears in the corner.

  Which corner? How do we designate exact corners?

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CLEAR TIME WORDS AND SPECIFIC AMOUNTS

- Be sure to give **complete directions** in case of a "crisis." For example, if the user hits ENTER and is *supposed* to arrive at a certain screen, what should he/she do if a different screen appears?

  ***Example*:**

  When you press F5, the drive screen should appear. Then hit ENTER to change the drive reading.

  Problem:

  What happens if the user hits F5 but is then met with a blank screen, or a different screen? Be sure to tell the user how to get out of a potential crisis. Conditional statements (If . . . then . . .) work well on these occasions.

  In essence, don't ever lose your readers or leave them stranded – make sure they know not only what to expect, but what to do in case the unexpected occurs.

  Also, that "should" is not very comforting – take a firm stand and be confident that your directions will work!

  ***Revision*:**

  When you press F5, the drive screen appears. If the drive screen does not appear, then you are not ready to change drives. Press the ESCAPE key and this will take you back to the main menu. Press F5 again. If you do not get into the drive screen then, press CNTRL, ALT and DELETE together to reboot the system. This will take you back to step 3.

  Note: if you use the "if . . . then . . ." construction, make sure that it is not a backwards construction.

Backwards: Press the CLEAR RESET key if you want to erase everything on the hard drive.

Forwards: If you want to erase everything on the hard drive, press the CLEAR RESET key.

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DOCUMENTATION PITFALLS

Choose your words and phrases wisely. Remember, your goal is to communicate and instruct. Avoid these:

1. Job Jargon

Before: In the Information Center environment, the manager should utilize a prioritization ranking to facilitate equitable scheduling.

After: In the Information Center, the manager ranks each job in order to produce a fair schedule.

Before: If your configuration has sufficient RAM capacity, you may utilize the system's windowing capability.

After: If your computer has enough memory, you can use the *window* feature.

2. Too Many Words

Before: In the event that you have a lack of knowledge regarding which drive you are working in, make use of the file manager component.

After: If you don't know which drive you are working in, use the file manager.

Before: Should it prove to be the case that you have some reservations regarding the forecasts, you have the option of employing alternate discount rates.

After: If you doubt the forecasts, try other discount rates.

3. Vague and Incomplete Terminology

Before: Get column heading revision permission from HCOL entry.

After: If you need to change a column heading, enter HCOL.

Before: Early manual design yields procedural usability benefits.

After: Manuals will be easier to use if you write them as you develop the system.

INSTRUCTIONS

Write a set of instructions for something that you do every day on the job. Make it a manageable task – no more than 10 steps – and be sure to apply the information given in these worksheets. Number the steps (to be very clear).

When you are finished, we will use peer review to critique your work.

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DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 2

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:

- analyze the audience
- use visuals appropriately
- present questions and answers
- identify system types
- use standard company procedures
- generate client profiles

TOPICS:

- Lines of Communication
- Audience Analysis
- Visuals
- Presentation Aids
- Question and Answer Sessions
- Company Procedures and Client Profiles

METHODS:

- class discussion
- individual writing
- pair work

EVALUATION:

At the end of this session, students will be competent in these areas:

- identifying and categorizing system types
- identifying audience needs
- using visuals for instruction
- writing client profiles

MATERIALS:

- worksheets
- company document structure

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THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION

WRITER	INFORMATION to COMMUNICATE	AUDIENCE
Data Coordinator	**Documentation**	**Future Data Coordinators** **Assistant Managers**
? ? ? ?		
What is my goal? What is my purpose? What do I want my reader to do?	What style? What visuals?	What knowledge do they have? Why do they need the document? How will the document be used? Is there anyone else who will read the document?

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AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

A. Audience Identity:

Who? _____

Relationship to me? _____

Knowledge about product? _____

Training/experience in the system? _____

Intended use of document? _____

Additional background information: _____

_____

Probable questions about product/system? _____

_____

Probable questions about document? _____

_____

B. Expectations

Reason document originated: _____

Importance of material to the audience: _____

Intended effect: _____

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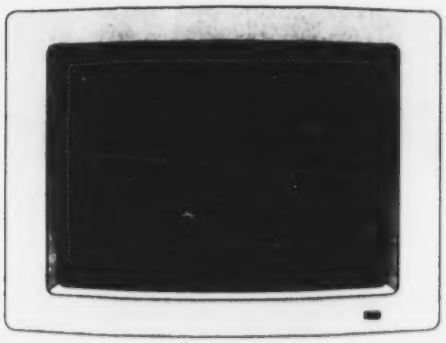
VISUALS



Sometimes it's easier to show something than it is to explain it in words. In that case, a **visual** is appropriate.

- A visual is anything that shows readers what something looks like (illustration/diagram), how it works (flowchart), how information is compared (tables, charts, and graphs), or what they can expect on a screen (screen sample).

- The visual should not be too complicated since what you are trying to do is make the concept easier for your readers!

Note: don't use visuals indiscriminately for they can overwhelm the reader. Use them only when you feel they convey the message better than words would.

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VISUALS

Note to Instructor:

Use job related diagrams according to individual company needs

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PRESENTATION AIDS

1) **Never use a presentation aid before an audience until you have rehearsed with it.**

- Be sure it works!
- Know how to set it up.
- Try the visual out on videotape or with an objective observer

2) **Make sure the visual aid is a help rather than a hindrance to communication.**

- Keep aids simple, clear, and accurate
- Don't use too many visuals; no more than 7 or 8 for a 15 minute presentation
- Show only one key concept per visual
- Be sure the visual conveys the idea better than speech alone could
- Use pictures and graphics rather than text
- Use contrast or color to emphasize or clarify main points, but don't overdo it

3) **Don't waste your audience's time with your presentation aids.**

- Be sure all necessary equipment is available and in place before you start
- Be sure your visuals are in sequence before you start
- Don't put away your equipment -- wait until your audience has left

4) **Project your voice more than normal**

- Remember that a listeners attention is divided between you and the visual (particularly if the room is darkened)

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PRESENTATION AIDS

5) Don't stand between your listeners and the visual aid

- Stand to one side (and vary the side)
- Use a pointer

6) Don't let the visual aid distract you

- Face and talk to the audience, not to the aid
- Don't interrupt your talk when you change slides or handle aids
- Use the aid to support your message; avoid modifying your message to support the aid

7) Don't let the visual aid distract your audience

- Don't show the aid until you are ready to use it
- Handle the aid only when you are making a direct reference to it
- When you're through with it, turn it off, remove it, or cover it
- Don't pass objects around during the presentation; either show them to the group as a whole or display them afterwards

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DESIGNING EFFECTIVE VISUAL AIDS

An effective visual aid must . . .

- Present an idea better than speech alone
- Represent a key concept
- Support only one major idea
- Emphasize pictures or graphs rather than words
- Restrict the use of text to a maximum of 6 words per line, and 10 words per visual, with short phrases or key words rather than complete sentences
- Use color or contrast to highlight important points
- Represent facts accurately
- Be neat, clear, uncluttered
- Be appropriate to the audience, occasion, and message
- Have impact!

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VISUAL AIDS GUIDE

TYPE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
Blackboard ***White board***	Versatile; easily available; inexpensive; good for informal message; small group audience involvement; room stays lit	Have to turn back to audience to write; have to stop and erase; can't be seen in large room; may not be very legible	Stand to one side so audience can see and you can maintain eye contact; write legibly and with large markers; prepare diagrams beforehand; erase ideas when finished
Flip charts ***Easels***	More professional than a blackboard/white board; more flexible; no need to erase; you can return to earlier notes	Clumsy to carry; not good for large room	Be sure charts are neat and well prepared; be simple; one idea per chart; don't talk to chart; keep chart covered until ready for it; keep several different colored pens handy
Overheads	Portable; easy to use; inexpensive; prepared ahead of time; order can be changed; face the audience; room stays lit; machine is up front with speaker; little chance of mechanical failure	Clumsy to carry; projector may block view; tendency to confuse up/down; tendency to get out of focus	Watch that machinery doesn't block view; practice using the machine; don't put too much on individual overheads; try to type rather than handwrite

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VISUAL AIDS GUIDE

TYPE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	TIPS
Slides	Prepared ahead of time; projectors are small, portable, and unobtrusive; easy to use; professional looking; slides can be rearranged and reused; color	Expensive if professionally prepared; room must be darkened	Put as little as possible on each slide; build up your points, one on each successive slide; slides can be converted to film strips when the same presentation is given a number of times
Videotape	Novelty; instant replay; good for repeated standardized presentations; excellent for training and rehearsal where feedback is important; room can be lit	Expensive; need TV monitor for viewing; TV format can distract audience from speaker	Practice first; if showing a part of a video, be sure you know where to stop and start; if showing whole video, make sure it's rewound before you start
Handouts	Can give extra background information to reinforce presentation; can be looked at in the audience's own time	Can be distracting; can be too detailed or overwhelming	Keep simple; try to use the same format for each page; decide whether to give them out before, during, or after presentation

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QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSIONS

? ? ? ?

General Tips

? Anticipate the most likely questions and prepare suitable responses

? Jot down statistics, dates, and other specific information

? Don't interrupt a question

? Repeat the question in your own words so that the audience can hear it and you have time to think about your answer

? If you are challenged, try "Yes, but . . ." to agree with a minor aspect of the question, but then go on to refute the questioner's position
If the questioner persists, don't get into an argument – suggest discussion after the session

? Spread questions around the room to avoid any one person dominating

? If questions aren't forthcoming, try posing a few yourself and answering them

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HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS

❶ Prepare:

- anticipate
- prepare
- practice

❷ Repeat the question:

- buy time
- let everyone hear it
- make sure you understand the question
- concentrate on the concept of the question

❸ Maintain the same style

- Don't suddenly shift into jargon or incomprehensible language
- Don't become more nervous when you ad lib
- Don't be afraid to say "I don't Know" -- but try to get back to that person at a later date

❹ Involve the whole audience

- Keep 20% of eye contact on the person who asked the question
- and 80% to the rest of the audience

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HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS

❺ Don't rate or judge the question

- Don't say, "What a good question," or "Weren't you paying attention?"

❻ Neutralize negative questions

- Turn negative comments or questions into positive answers
  e.g. "I think your product stinks!"
  "Oh, so you're asking about the quality of our product? Yes, independent testing shows that . . ."

❼ Bring the Q/A session to a close

- Say, "Time for three more questions" or "We have a few more minutes"
- Rephrase your summary

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GETTING EVERYONE ON TRACK?

If we want to get everyone on the same track in terms of documentation, or make sure that we are all gathering and reporting similar information, then we all have to be asking the same questions and getting the same kinds of information to input into a system.

One way to start is to see if we can make generalizations about the clients' expectations. Of course the clients are different, but sometimes they can have a lot in common.

Consider these questions:

- What kinds of systems are there? What are the system types?
- What kinds of accounts are there?
- What kind of customer requests are there?
- If you had to give client profiles, what information would you include?

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PROFILES

Pick a client with whom you are familiar. Generate questions to get all the information required for the profile. Then write a profile of that client so that it follows the acceptable standard. Next, give a description of the account type and requests.

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DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 3

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:

- identify problems with documentation
- fix bad documentation
- use clear editing abbreviations

TOPICS:

- unclear messages
- incomplete instructions
- fixing bad documentation
- editing abbreviations

METHODS:

- class discussion
- pair work

EVALUATION:

At the end of this session, students will be more competent in these areas:

- recognizing poor documentation
- writing clear documentation
- giving and taking clear instructions for rewriting poor documentation

MATERIALS:

- worksheets
- examples of bad documentation

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FIXING BAD DOCUMENTATION

The Process By Which One Performs The Installation Technique

The NorthTamCo Mailing List System can easily receive the installation technique performed by the user.

By typing the directory name **MD**, create a **DOS** directory (***Directory Name***). Enter. Currently, the name you desire to be assigned to the directory would be keyed in the parenthesis. It is imperative that the name which is desired be a name that can be easily recognized by each and every alternative user. By typing **CD**, the directory can be changed by the user (***Name of the Directory***), where the name of the intended directory is the name of the newly created directory. Enter. The disk can be inserted. The diskette drive B should be employed for this particular aspect of the process. If not, another drive should be designated. (C = the drive the software is being installed on). Enter. The North System has at this point in time been successfully and completely installed.

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FIXING BAD DOCUMENTATION

Word for Windows File

Turn on. Hit Microsoft Word. Insert disk. Hit **OPEN** file icon. Change drives. Click on file. Open.

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FIXING BAD DOCUMENTATION

From the main screen, depress **F9**. An Export pop-up window should appear. At this juncture of events, the operator will be informed of the number of diskettes required to export the records. Using the arrow key, the drive to which the records will be exported to will be selected. Press **ENTER**. A "Please Wait" pop-up window ought to appear. The process having been completed, the operator will be taken back to the main screen again.

Note: All records should have been previously loaded onto the selected drive.

By depressing **F10**, the program will be excited from.

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ABBREVIATIONS FOR EDITING

Abbreviation	Meaning
A/P voice	active / passive voice
vb.t.	verb tense
pro.	pronoun
sbj.	subject
obj.	object
vb.	verb
agr.	agreement
sbj./vb. agr.	subject / verb agreement
sbj./ pro. agr.	subject / pronoun agreement
sing.	singular
pl.	plural
mod.	modifier
w.w.	wrong word
w.i.	wrong information
frag.	fragment
punct.	punctuation
sp.	spelling
inc.	incomplete sentence
e.g.	example
seq.	sequence
amb.	ambiguous
instr.	instruction(s)
uncl.	unclear
r.o.	run on sentence

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STANDARD REVISION MARKS

Mark	Meaning	Draft	Revision
	insert space	It will take sometime to do.	It will take some time to do.
	close up space	Please finish this some time soon.	Please finish this sometime soon.
	align vertically	$4.77 $5.78 $86.53	$4.77 $5.78 $86.53
	new paragraph	Please get back to us this week.	Please get back to us this week.
	indent	Your materials are enclosed.	Your materials are enclosed.
	use capital letters	john spoke to mr. Lewis.	John spoke to Mr. Lewis.

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STANDARD REVISION MARKS

Mark	Meaning	Draft	Revision
	use lowercase letters	We used the new Computers.	We used the new computers.
	move to left	The report was not on time.	The report was not on time.
	move to right	Denver Colorado	Denver Colorado
	boldface print	Proofreading is important.	**Proofreading** is important.
	delete information	Dave spoke toe the the group.	Dave spoke to the group.
	insert information	Maria went the meeting.	Maria went to the meeting.
	transpose	We will able be to make a profit.	We will be able to make a profit.
	move	On May 8, the company hired me.	The company hired me on May 8.

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DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 4

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:

- identify problems with documentation
- fix bad documentation
- use clear editing abbreviations
- review previously discussed concepts

TOPICS:

- elements of good vs. documentation
- fixing bad documentation
- using editing abbreviations

METHODS:

- class discussion
- pair work

EVALUATION:

At the end of this session, students will be more competent in these areas:

- recognizing poor documentation
- writing clear documentation
- giving and taking clear instructions for rewriting poor documentation

MATERIALS:

- example of bad documentation

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USER DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

When composing a User Document, please attend to the following outline:

A. Cover Sheet

- Client Name
- Job Number
- Client Contact
- Data Coordinator
- Sales Executive
- Planner
- Date Proposed

B. Table of Contents

C. Program Narrative

- Background Information
- Scope of Job (Marketing Objectives)

D. System Profile

- Mainframe Online
- Mainframe Batch
- PC – Development Software

E. Input

- Sources
- Upfront Clerical Procedures
- Disposition of Input

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USER DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

F. Operating Instruments

- File Outputs
- Detailed Walkthrough
- Screens
- Greensheets
- Run Instructions

G. Outputs

- Types (names of reports and descriptions)
- Quantity of copies
- Frequency
- Samples (when possible)

H. Quality Assessment (QA)

- Processes and Procedures
- Check List

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USER DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

Note to Instructor:

Use company specific User Documentation

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DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 5

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:

- write their own clear and concise documentation

TOPICS:

- writing documentation

METHODS:

- individual writing

EVALUATION:

- students will evaluate their own work as they write

MATERIALS:

- self-generated

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DOCUMENTATION ◆ SESSION 6

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this session, students will be able to do the following:

- write their own clear and concise documentation
- evaluate each other's work

TOPICS:

- writing documentation
- peer evaluation
- documentation checklist

METHODS:

- individual writing
- peer critique

EVALUATION:

- students will evaluate their own work as they write
- students will evaluate each other's work when they have completed their own documentation

MATERIALS:

- self-generated

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DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST

Now that you have written your documentation, **have you** . . .?

- **Defined** a clear *purpose?*
- **Identified** your *audience?*
- **Kept** a clear *sequence?*
- **Written** in a *clear and concise manner* using
  - active voice?
  - strong and clear verbs?
  - consistent verb tenses?
  - correctly placed modifiers?
  - clear pronouns?
  - clear time words and other directives?
  - specific number amounts?
- **Avoided** *jargon and verbose structures?*
- **Included** appropriate *visuals?*
- **Included** *a cover sheet and profile?*

- Is your document **user friendly?**
- Is your document easy to update?

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